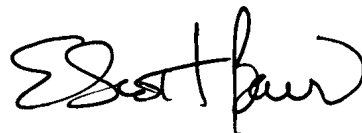


Senior Thesis

**The Ground-Water Potential  
of Two Proposed Well Sites in  
Northeastern Pickaway County, Ohio**

by  
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Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of  
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Adviser

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	Page
List of Figures.....	3
List of Tables and Plates.....	4
CHAPTER	
1. Abstract.....	5
2. Introduction.....	5
3. Climate.....	6
4. Pleistocene Geology.....	7
5. Bedrock Aquifer Potential.....	9
6. Glacier Aquifer Potential	
Outwash.....	10
Till.....	12
7. Conclusions.....	13
8. References.....	14

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	Pickaway County, Ohio -- well sites.....	16
2	Preglacial Teays River and alternative course.....	17
3	Glacial events in Ohio.....	18
4	Bedrock topography, Harrison - Walnut Twps .....	19
5	Bedrock topography, Madison Twp.....	20
6	Composite water - level map of the glacial materials, Harrison - Walnut Twps.....	21
7	Composite water - level map of the glacial materials, Madison Twp.....	22
8	Induced recharge diagram.....	23

LIST OF TABLES AND PLATES

TABLES	Page
1 Well-log information.....	24

PLATES	
I Harrison - Walnut Townships, cross section A-A'.....	in pocket ✓
II Walnut Township, cross section B-B'.....	in pocket ✓
III Madison Township, cross section A-A'.....	in pocket ✓
IV Madison Township, cross section B-B'.....	in pocket ✓



## **ABSTRACT**

The City of Columbus has purchased two potential well sites, one in southwestern Harrison Township along Big Walnut Creek, and the other further upstream in central Madison Township. The objective of my study is to characterize the hydrogeologic setting of each of these sites.

The analysis will be based on well logs of all domestic wells in the area, including those that had to be located in the field due to a drilling date after the 1960's, after the last ODNR map was constructed. The logs were used to construct four cross sections, two for each site, one on either side of each proposed site.

The well-log information was also used to construct a composite potentiometric-surface map. Bedrock topography maps were derived from other sources due the shallowness of the area wells.

Geologic information was obtained from the area in order to understand the concepts of the buried valleys and what impact this would have on the hydrogeologic resources. Climatic data were also gathered in order to understand the amount of recharge that each area might receive.

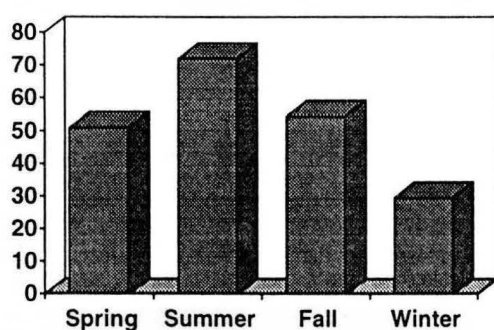
## **INTRODUCTION**

The sources of municipal water in Franklin County are no longer sufficient to keep up with the demand of its population. For this reason, Franklin County has looked to Pickaway County, in addition to other counties, for additional sources of water. Two potential well fields are being considered in northwestern Pickaway County for this purpose, the Madison Township well site and the Harrison Township well site (figure 1). The construction of wells at these potential sites and the use of this water in Franklin County are controversial. In effect, the residents of Pickaway County feel that their water

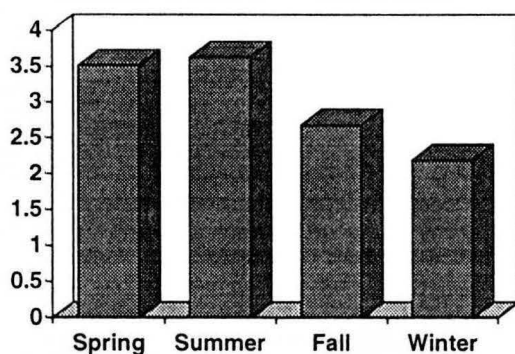
supply is being “stolen”. The purpose of this paper is to study the aquifer potential of these two well sites.

## CLIMATE

The following graphs portray the normal temperatures (Fahrenheit) and rainfall (inches) for Circleville, Ohio. Annually, Circleville has an average temperature of 51.5°F and an average rainfall of 37.99 inches. These data are the result of averaging the observed values from 1961 through 1990 (NOAA, 1961-1990).



Temperature (Fahrenheit)



Rainfall (inches)

## PLEISTOCENE GEOLOGY

Before the Pleistocene Epoch (2 mya), the Teays River originated in the Appalachian Mountains in northern North Carolina. It flowed northwest where it entered Ohio in south-central Scioto County and continued flowing northward through Pickaway County. It then took a sharp turn to the west just north of Asheville, Ohio. At this point the Teays River joined with the ancient Groveport River, and continued this course into Madison County. Then it flowed northwestward across western Ohio into Indiana, and eventually across eastern Illinois where it joined with an embayment of the Gulf of Mexico (figure 2). The Teays River was about 800 miles long and drained about two-thirds of Ohio (Hansen, 1987).

It carved out a narrow and deep valley in Pickaway County, with valley depths below 550 feet above sea level in some areas. Depths of this valley varied due to the erosional character of the rocks in the area. For example, the Devonian Shale east of the present Scioto River is more resistant to erosion than the Silurian and Devonian carbonates of western Pickaway County (Bain, 1979).

Some geologists believe that the Teays River took a different course (Hansen, 1995). Instead of the Teays River taking a bend toward the west in Ohio, as described above, they believe that it continued northward, and eventually joined with the ancient Erigan River. This stream was once flowing in the same area that Lake Erie lies today (figure 2). They believe that the buried valley that runs in the westward direction was once a part of a meltwater stream that flowed along the ice front of an earlier glacier (Hansen, 1995). Unfortunately, the erosive nature of later glaciers and meltwater have buried any decent evidence that would prove or disprove either theory.

During the Pleistocene Epoch, there were several periods of glaciation and interglaciation that affected most of Ohio (figure 3). The Nebraskan glaciation that covered most of Ohio between 2 million to 690,000 years ago is thought to have dammed

up the Teays River, causing many lakes to form in the southern part of the state.

Evidence for the age of the damming comes from studies done on the magnetic polarity of a clay, known as the Minford clay, or Minford silt, deposited in these lakes. It was found that there was a reversed magnetic pole at this time, known as the Matuyama Reversed Epoch. The magnetic poles returned to their normal state about 690,000 years ago. Because of this, the clay had to have been deposited between 2 mya and 690,000 ya (Hansen, 1987). The Minford clay is the thickest in southern and southeastern Ohio, where thicknesses reach up to 900 feet in an area that once was covered by a large lake, Lake Tight (Hansen, 1987). This is only one of the many lakes that formed as a result of the damming of the Teays River. In Pickaway County, the maximum thickness of this clay is unknown due to the erosion that came as a result of the following periods of glaciation (Bain, 1979).

While this ice sheet was retreating, the meltways cut the Deep Stage channel, which is approximately parallel to the present course of the Scioto River. These meltwaters cut a valley deeper into the bedrock than did the Teas River, hence the name "Deep Stage". The drainage of this valley was opposite that of the Teays River and flowed from north to south. This channel became filled with sand and gravel, forming the thick sand and gravel aquifer found in the buried valley in central Pickaway County. This sand and gravel filled the Deep Stage channel, including the lower parts of the Teays River channel in some areas. This resulted in a sand and gravel aquifer that reaches elevations of 550 to 600 feet (Bain, 1979). At this time, in the southern portion of Ohio, the modern drainage system of the Ohio River was formed.

Above this aquifer is a thick clay layer, resulting from the Wisconsinan and Illinoian glacial events during the Pleistocene Epoch. This thick clay is found in northern Pickaway County, indicating that there was a minor readvancement of the glaciers (Bain, 1979). This thick clay layer forms a poorly permeable layer above the sand and gravel aquifer.

After Pleistocene glaciation, the Scioto River formed its present course at an elevation of 600 to 660 feet above sea level. The Scioto River begins in west-central Ohio, in Hardin County, and continues east to Marion County. It then continues south through Franklin and Pickaway Counties and eventually drains into the Ohio River in southern Scioto County.

## **BEDROCK AQUIFER POTENTIAL**

The bedrock at both potential well fields is shale of Devonian to Mississippian age. The shale is poorly permeable and has a well yield is similar to clay. Well yields do not exceed 2 gpm in most areas, and the shale is generally stated to be a poor source of ground water (ODNR, 1958). Most water that is available from this bedrock is in the uppermost 10 to 50 feet due to fractures in the shale as a result of weathering. Here, ground water may flow due to the fractures but at a greater depth permeability will decrease because fewer fractures are present. Ground water may be able to be stored in the shale but water will not flow readily (Division of Water, 1960). Leakage in the shale may occur from the overlying aquifer or from the carbonate sequence below (Allong, 1971).

Based on well logs (table 1) and other outside sources, I constructed two cross sections for each potential well field (Plates I-IV). Bedrock relief is as much as 20 feet at the Harrison Township well site (Plates I and II) and as much as 50 feet at the Madison Township well site (Plates III and IV). The large amount of relief found at the Madison Township well site is due to its proximity to the buried valley system. Bedrock relief in the area on a larger scale around the proposed well sites was modified from Bain (1979) in figures 4 and 5.

## GLACIAL AQUIFER POTENTIAL

### Outwash

Sand and gravel that was deposited within channels as a part of the drainage system for glacier meltwaters and the course of these rivers was determined, in part, by the glacial ice fronts. The valleys cut by the Teays River and the Deep Stage drainage system were filled mostly with sand and gravel. Commonly, these deposits exceed 100 feet in thickness and have been found to be as thick as 300 feet. The sand and gravel aquifer in the proposed well site areas was deposited by meltwater streams such as during the development of the Deep Stage drainage system. It is sometimes seen to be interfingered with clay lenses. Domestic well logs of the area show (Table 1) many clay lenses in the area of the proposed well sites (Plates I-IV).

In Pickaway County, where the sand and gravel aquifers are shallow enough and occasionally exposed, "water is stored under water-table conditions" and some water may be stored above the water table (Allong, 1971). In the buried deposits, though, confined aquifer conditions occur.

Data from the London Fish Hatchery in Madison County (transmissivity and storage coefficients) indicate that the permeability of lens-like deposits are less than that of the channel-fill deposits. This is also true at the London Prison Farm, and at New Vienna, in Clinton County (Allong, 1971).

Flow throughout the Scioto River valley is towards the Scioto River regionally, with Walnut Creek intercepting some of the ground-water flow. Locally, flow moves towards the buried valleys, and then downgradient along these deposits, which have greater permeability.

Based on historic well-log information, the local hydraulic gradient at the Madison Township well site is between 0.0018 - 0.0053 towards Walnut Creek and at the Harrison Township well site it is about 0.0055 towards Walnut Creek. At the latter site

there is a local potentiometric high, with the southeast side draining towards Walnut Creek and the northwest side draining into the Scioto River (figures 6 and 7).

Recharge in the area is mainly due to precipitation, runoff, flooding, and leakage across confining layers. Precipitation is a good source of recharge mainly in the spring when evapotranspiration is low and storms yield large amounts of precipitation. Runoff from the higher edges of the valley also is a source of recharge of the streams. Flooding causes water to be added to the sand and gravel aquifers that are present at the earth's surface. Leakage is a reliable source of recharge, allowing surface water to penetrate the deeper aquifers and provide water to the deeper wells. Locally, the bedrock is shale, and water is not leaked through the bedrock very well. This serves as a boundary surface for the buried valley aquifers.

The direction of ground-water flow can be greatly affected by pumping. There are only domestic wells in the area of study, so ground-water flow is basically normal, flowing towards the Scioto River and Walnut Creek. However, with the addition of the municipal wells that are to be drilled in these study areas, the potentiometric surface and, therefore, the ground-water flow, will be changed dramatically, and could cause the stream to recharge the aquifer in the areas of these wells (figure 8). This could enable very high production rates along the Scioto River and Walnut Creek in properly constructed wells. However, an increase in the pumping rates and a change in the local potentiometric surface may lead to the local dewatering of some domestic wells.

The proposed municipal wells should be large in diameter and be at a depth of about 75-135 feet (ODNR map, 1991). In this area, well yields can reach as high as 1000 gpm. These rates could be reached in both of the proposed well sites, due to their proximity to Walnut Creek. By constructing the wells with a different design from that mentioned above, the aquifer would support a pumping rate of 100 to 500 gpm (ODNR map, 1991).

Recharge from the river to the municipal wells would yield a quality of water that is similar to that of the stream. However, at the same time, conditions may improve due to an increase in the rate of water circulation (Allong, 1971).

## Till

Till is a mode of transport that in this area yielded deposits of thick clay along with some sand and gravel. It is a very poor aquifer due to the low permeability of the clay, and also to the varying grain sizes. This clay includes in some areas the Minford clay that was mentioned earlier. The till was found to have a possible yield of 5 gpm or less (ODNR map, 1960), with the permeability increasing slightly with increasing sand and gravel content (Allong, 1971).

The water table in the till tends to follow the topography in northeastern Pickaway County at a depth of about 5 to 10 feet (Bain, 1979). Local sand lenses may give the impression that the water table is higher, when in fact, it is only due to the water being under pressure from the confined aquifer caused by overlying clay or other semi-permeable surface.

According to Bain (1979), hydrograph studies done by Henning (1978) showed that the recharge rates into the streams Deer Creek, Mt. Sterling, and Darby Creek, in northwestern Pickaway County, were basically the same, with small amounts of variation due to possibly different composition of till, different thicknesses of the till, and variances in the streams, such as grade. Henning (1978) grouped his studies according to amount of precipitation, due to the fact that recharge of the till is directly related to the amount of precipitation of the area.

Discharge is mainly due to evapotranspiration (Allong, 1971). According to Allong (1971), a discharge rate of 1.24 mgd/sq. mile was estimated by Norris (1969). There is also a significant amount of runoff into the local streams because the till is so low in permeability (Allong, 1971). No wells in the area of study were found to be



pumping from the water table, but instead from the confined sand and gravel aquifer (ODNR well logs, table 1).

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The City of Columbus has purchased land in northeastern Pickaway County that may be used for future municipal wells. The Harrison Township well site and the Madison Township well site are located on the edge of the buried valley system of south-central Ohio. As a result, the amount of water available may be sufficient for the city's plans for the wells. Local aquifer conditions are good for the construction of large wells. The sand and gravel aquifer is often found to be between 100 and 300 feet in thickness, with some large clay lenses that cause confining layer conditions.

By pumping the wells at a high rate, the wells may draw water from the Scioto River and Walnut Creek, causing a discharge area to convert to a local recharge area. Although this allows for an increase in the amount of water available, it could lead to local dewatering of domestic wells.

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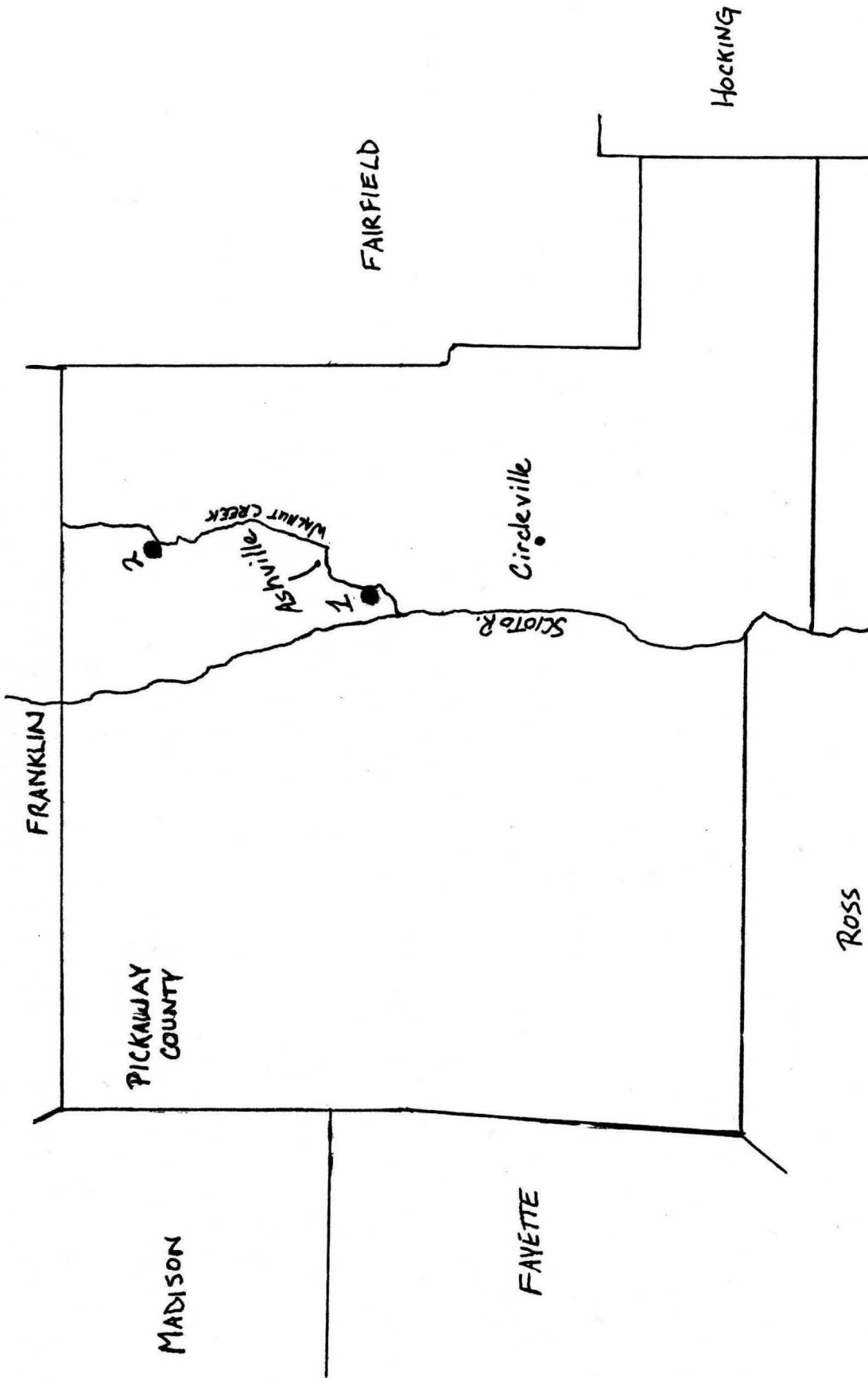
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\_\_\_\_\_, 1978, Underground water resource map: M-9 --Walnut Creek Basin: Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Div. of Water, Ohio Water Plan Inventory, map.

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FIGURE 1



LEGEND

- \*1 Harrison Twp. Well site
- \*2 Madison Twp. Well site

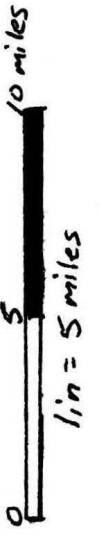
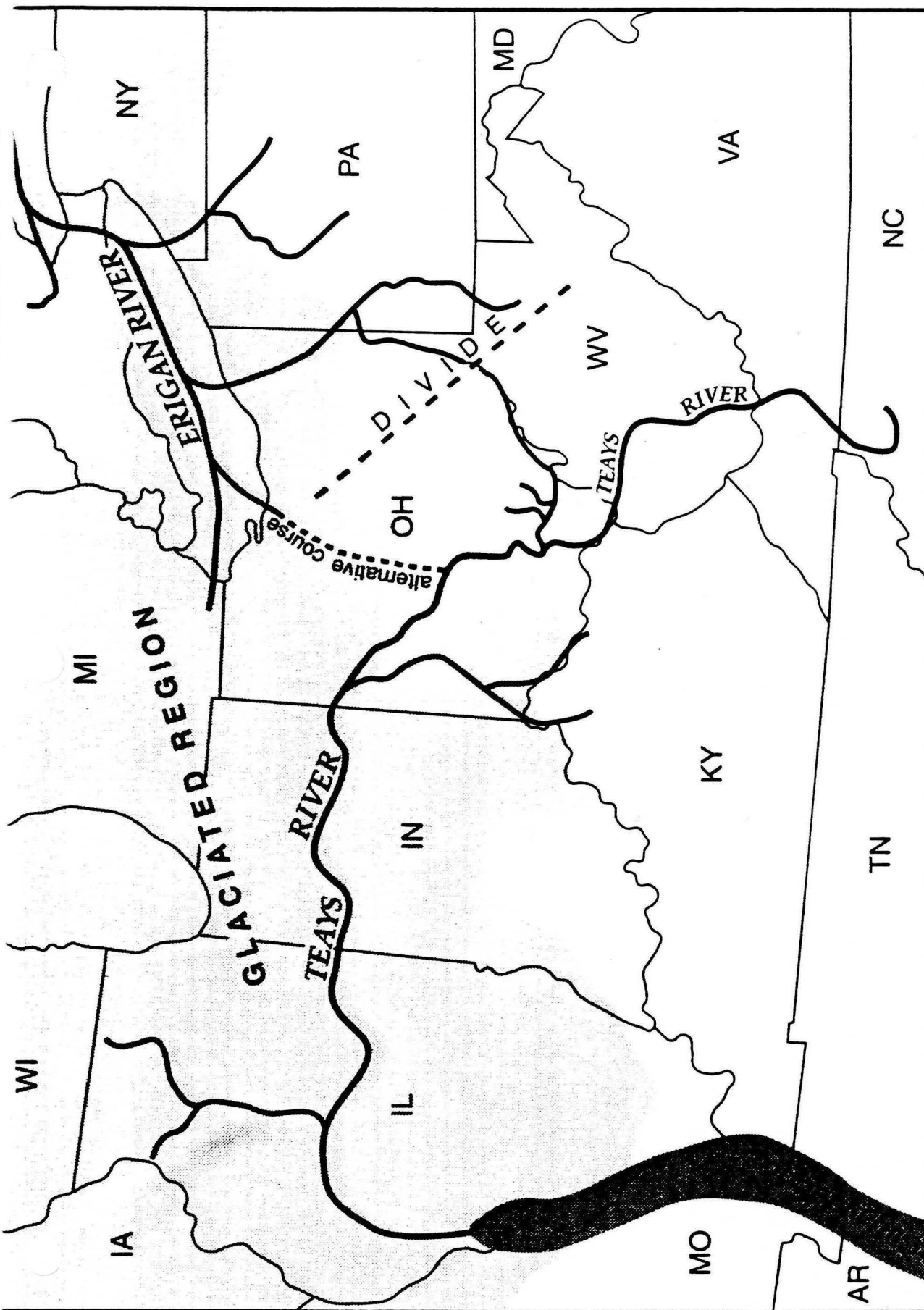


FIGURE 2



Classic interpretation of the preglacial Teays River and an alternative course (dashed line) favored by some geologists. The entire extent of the Teays and its tributaries north of the glacial border is buried beneath thick glacial drift. Northern Ohio was drained by the Eriean River, which followed the axis of what is now Lake Erie, and flowed into the ancestral St. Lawrence River. Neither the Great Lakes nor the Ohio River existed at this time.



FIGURE 3

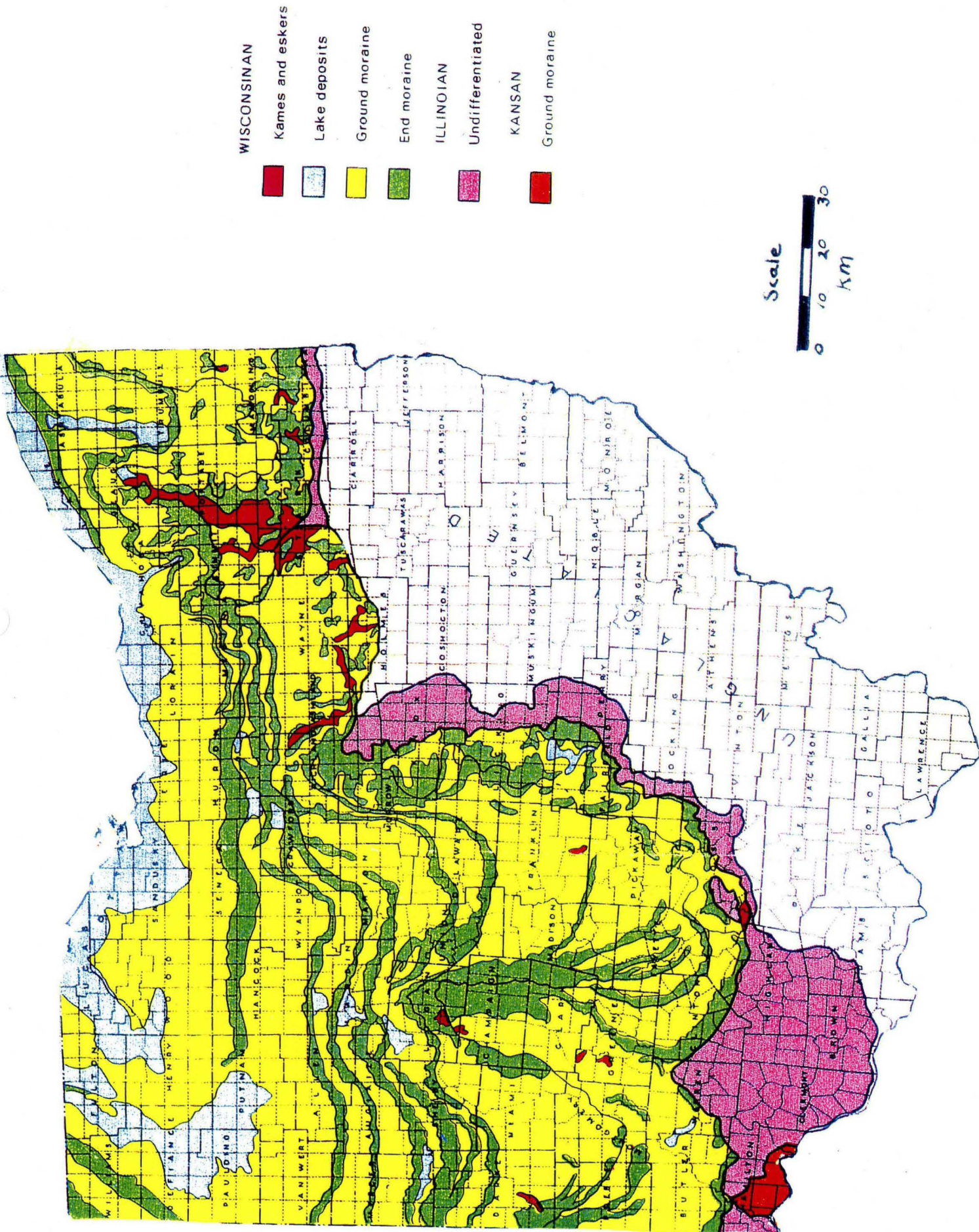
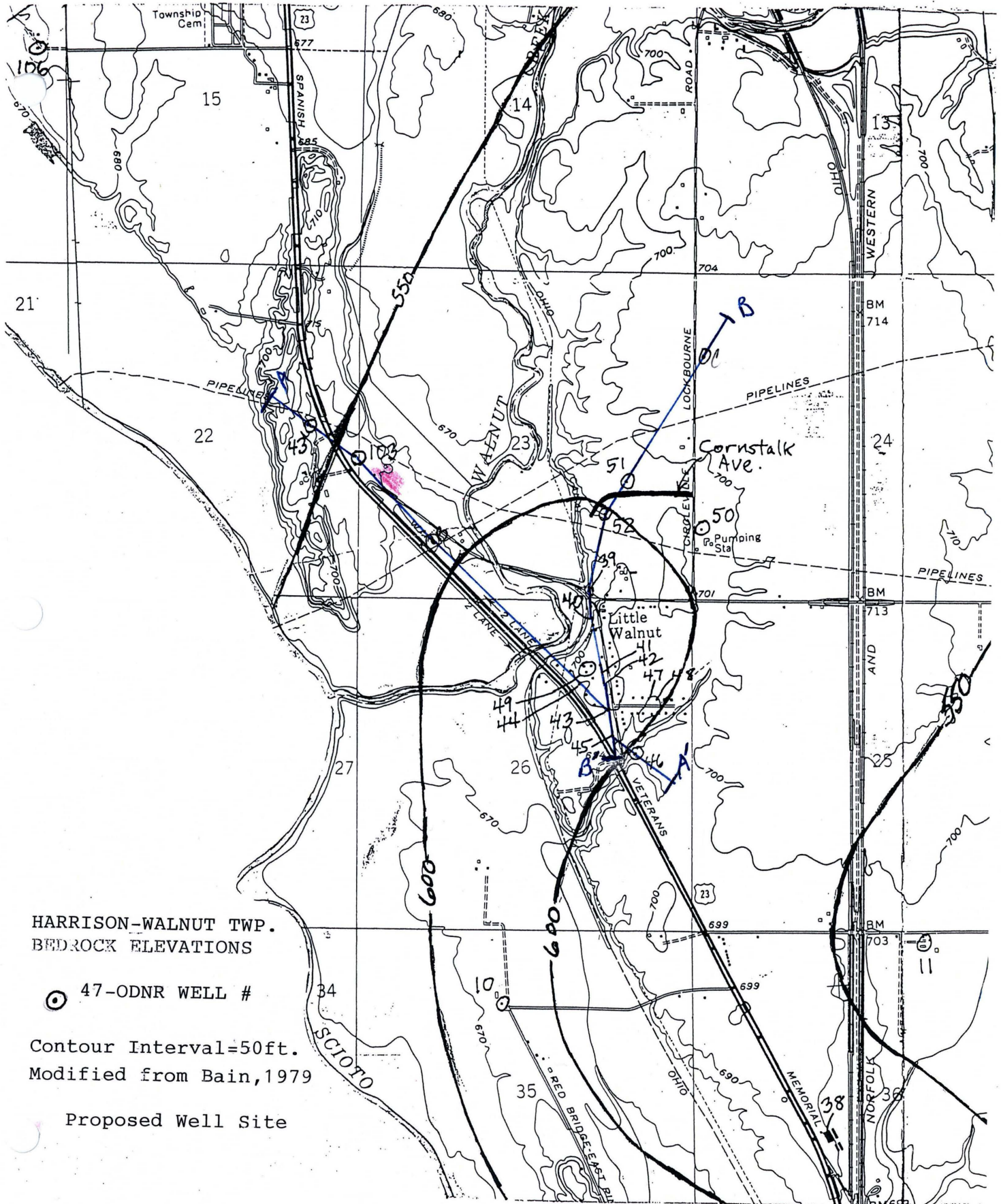




FIGURE 4



HARRISON-WALNUT TWP.  
BEDROCK ELEVATIONS

○ 47-ODNR WELL #

Contour Interval=50ft.  
Modified from Bain, 1979

Proposed Well Site



# BEDROCK ELEVATIONS-MADISON TWP.

FIGURE 5

27-ODNR WELL#

737-BEDROCK LEVEL (ft amsl)

B-letter created for  
this study

Contour Interval=50 ft.

proposed well site

Modified from Bain, 1979

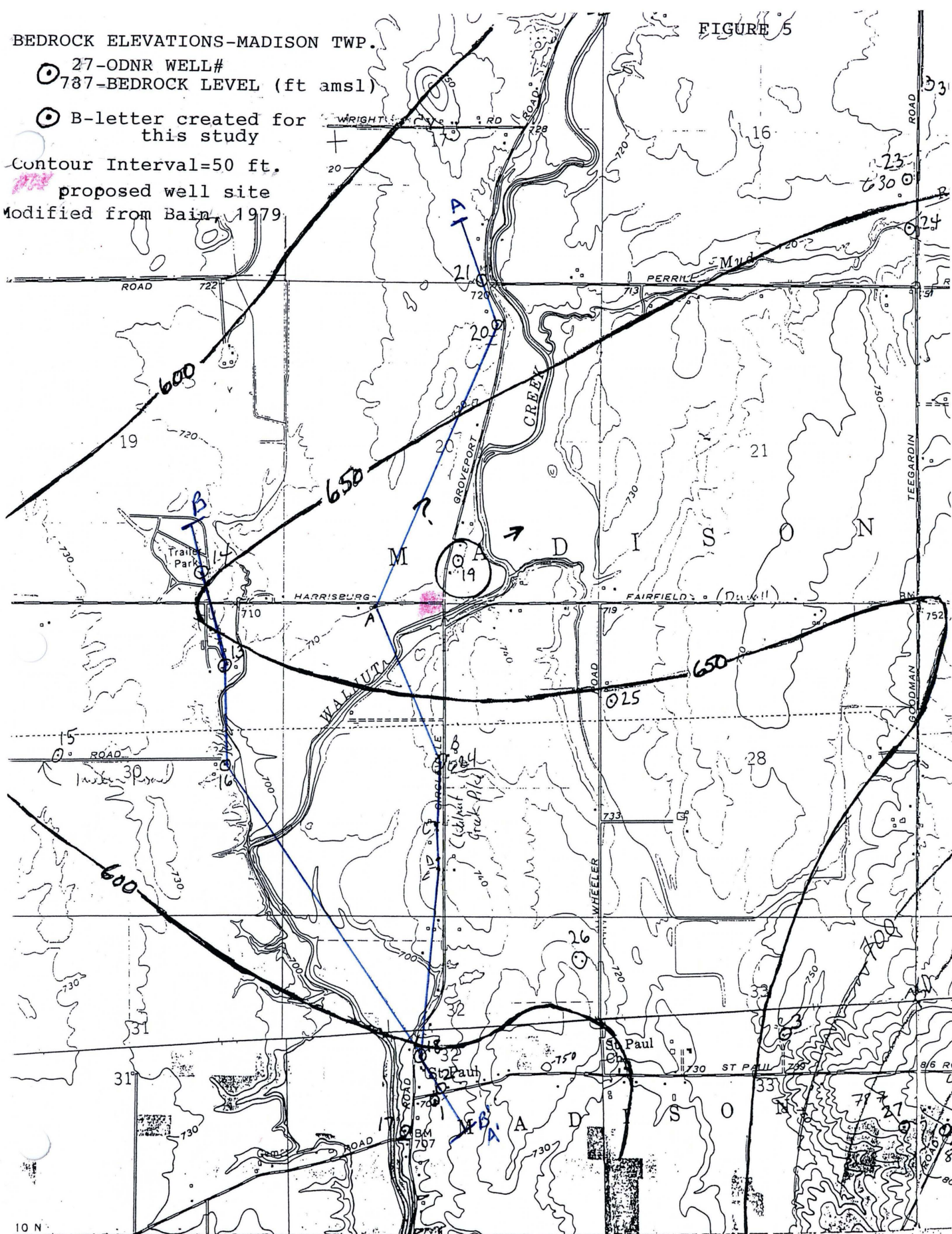
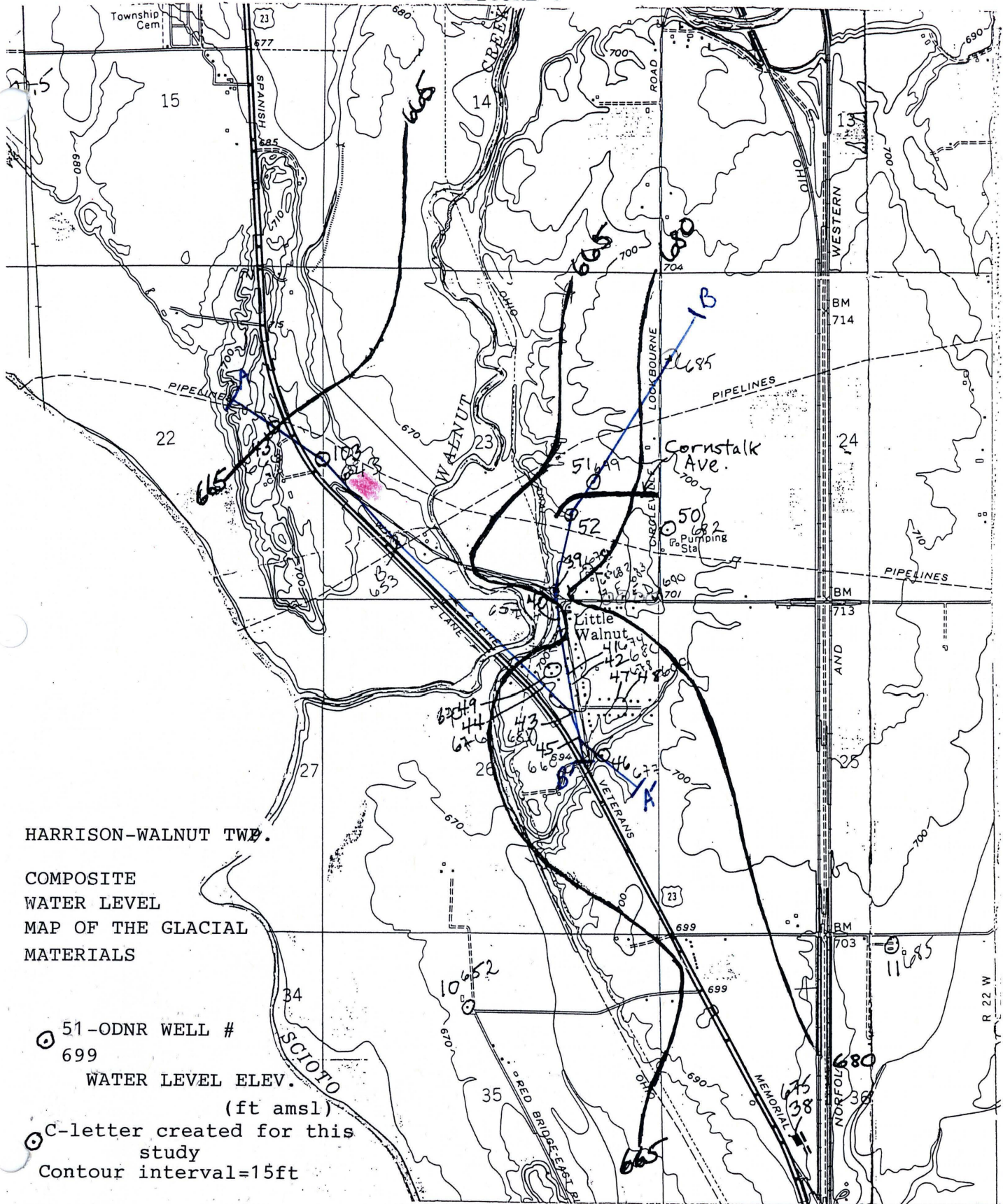




FIGURE 6





COMPOSITE WATER LEVEL MAP OF  
THE GLACIAL MATERIAL  
MADISON TWP.

FIGURE 7:

- 19-ODNR WELL #
- 700-WATER LEVEL ELEVATION (ft amsl)
- A-letter created for this study
- Contour interval=50 ft.
- proposed well site

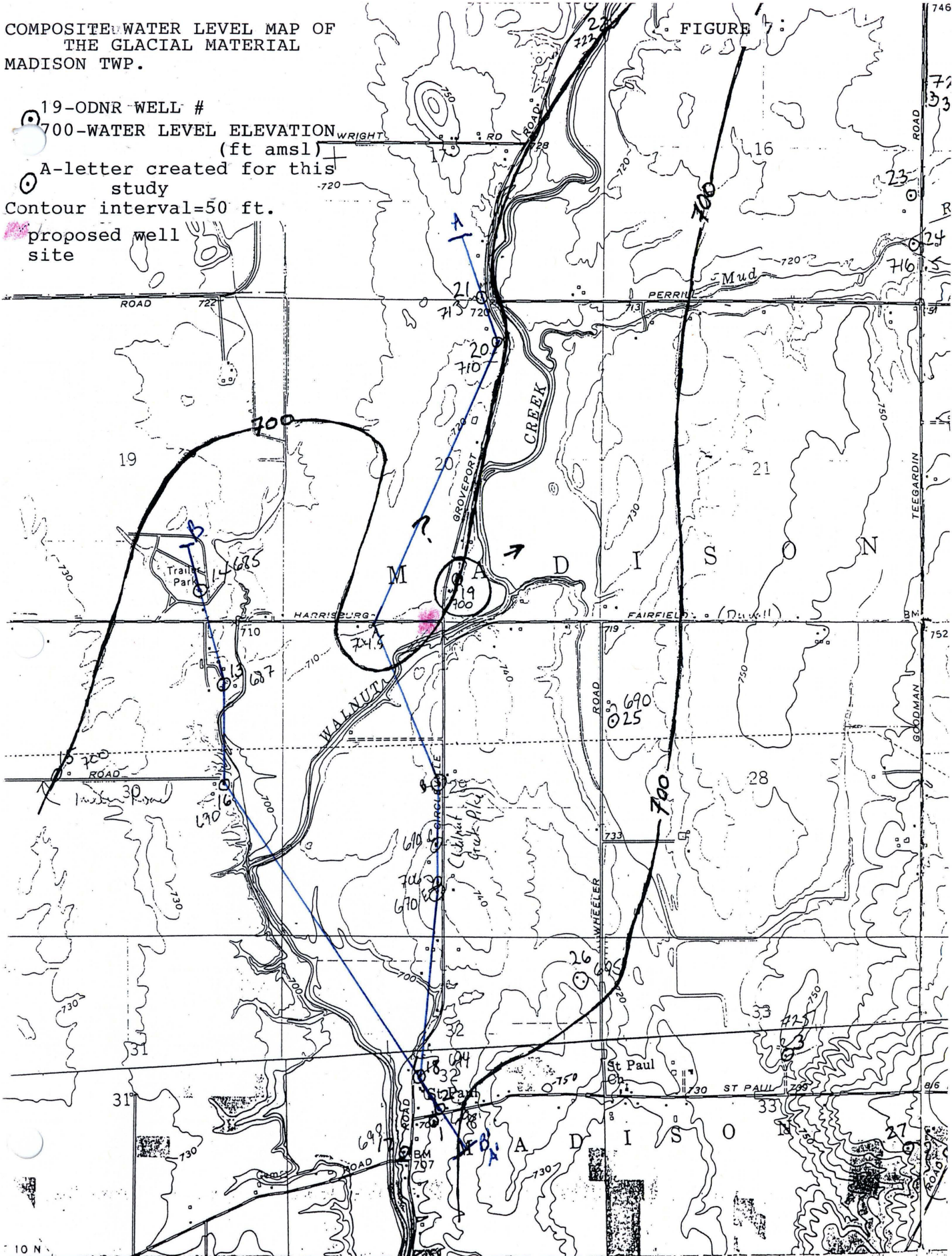


FIGURE 8

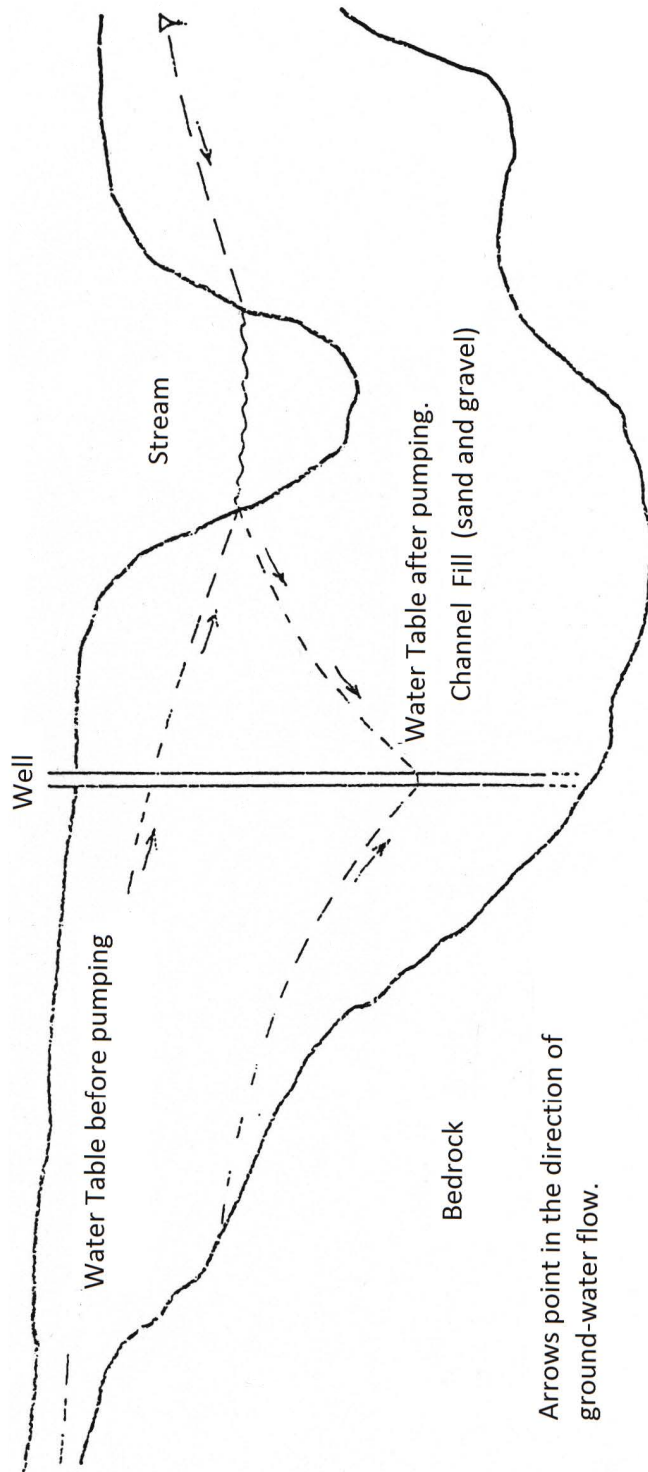


Figure 11. Schematic Diagram showing Induced Recharge

Table 1

Well # *	Well log # (ODNR)	Owner	Driller	Q/s (gpm/ft)	depth to water (ft)
<u>Harrison Twp.</u>					
B	627879	Porter	Gobel?	20/none	27
43	381265	State Hwy Patrol	Gobel's Well Drilling	20/1	24
103	298147	R. List	P. Wright	10/2	37
106	138943	J. Dowler	Short Bros.	5/yes	17.5
<u>Madison Twp.</u>					
A	705186	S. Edgar	Short Bros	7/.25	5.5
B	779494	M. Cline	R. C. Barry Inc	10/none	21
C	720225	L. Cline	Spung's	10/20	40
D	801196	Cline Bldrs	R. C. Barry	15/	29
E	758271	Roberts	Prof. water well system	15/10	70
2	309172	Hicks	Short Bros.	10/none	12
3	454541	Kennedy	C+P well drilling	3/	15
10	253691	Stir	Short Bros.	10/all	1
12	355520	Teegardin	Joe Christz	.5/total	8
13	328252	Crites	Joe Christz	12/1	33
19	462218	Wheeler	Short Bros.	8/3	10
20	462210	White	Short Bros.	15/2	10
21	462211	White	Short Bros.	15/8	17
22	400179	Karennich	Short Bros.	15/2	8
23	301741	Lurue	Short Bros.	10/yes	20
24	207026	Lurue	Short Bros.	30/10	3.5
25	265238	Ashmon	Short Bros.	10/3	30
26	354773	Purill	Short Bros.	12/25	35
27	369624	Solt	J. Christz	20gph/total	c.18
28	265245	Dixon	Short Bros.	10/all	11
29	253683	Roger	Short Bros.	12/all	4
35	179893	Zwayer	Short Bros.	60/?	34
36	301742	Zwayer	Short Bros.	10/none	20
<u>Walnut Twp.</u>					
A	627878	Rieghel	Gobel?	20/none	
C	677818	Thomas	Smith's Well Drilling	25/10	15
D	714470	Sturdy Bld	C&P Well Drilling	15/none	10
E	785285	Sturdy Bld	C&P Well Drilling	15/none	17
F	785293	Crum	C&P Well Drilling	15/none	18
G	792960	Cline Blds	R.C. Barry, Inc	10+/-	15
10	236431	Wellms	Joe Cristz	15/1.5	18
11	223505	Dawern	Grant Thomas	15/none	12
31	233050	Cummins	Short Bros.	20/yes	35
32	423656	Stewart	Sam Lewis	16/none	40
36	421417	Nothstein	Christz	20/4	30
37	240175	Noecker	Burl Gillum	32/35	25
38	386784	84 Lumber	R. Lewis	10/none	15
39	439545	Lemaster	C&P Well Drilling	18/none	11
40	267712	Marshall	D. L. Whitesed	/28	23

\* The numerical designations were assigned by ODNR, the alphabetical designations were created for this study.



Table 1

Well # *	Well log # (ODNR)	Owner	Driller	Q/s (gpm/ft)	depth to water (ft)	
41	216056	Toole	Joe Christz	16/3	26	
42	364523	Frazier	Gobel's Well Drlg	20/5	20	
43	187490	Hankins	Harley Noggle	10/4	19	
44	265169	Heslop	D. L. Whitesed	/28	24	
45	467666	Hooper	Joe Christz	25/3	30	
46	314512	Hills	D. L. Whitesed	24/22	13	
47	224670	Hoffhines	Short Bros.	8/2	22	
48	187494	Thomas	Harley Noggle	12/6	41	
49	454535	Dean	C&P Well Drilling	10/	32	
49	236435	Dean	Joe Cristz	12/2	30	
50	429520	Faunaugh	R. Lewis	16/none	18	
51	505406	Hahler	Merle Wright	12/3	26	
52	499159	Blanton	C&P Well Drilling	15/		
54	224667	Hallenback	Short Bros.	10/none	22	
57	347482	Pettibone	A F. Ryan Well Drlg	10/none	8	

\* The numerical designations were assigned by ODNR, the alphabetical designations were created for this study.

Table 1

Well #	depth to bedrock		surface elevation (ft):			depth well	date
	(ft)		land	water level	bedrock	(ft)	
<u>Harrison Twp.</u>							
B			680	653		36	Sep-85
43			690	666		46	Aug-68
103			680	643		70	Sep-63
106			690	672.5		32.5	Dec-54
<u>Madison Twp.</u>							
A			710	704.5		17	Apr-90
B	106		730	709	624	108	Oct-93
C			730	690		102	Nov-91
D			735	706		111	Oct-94
E			740	670		120	Sep-92
2			660	648		40	Mar-64
3			740	725		118	Jun-74
10			820	819		37	Apr-61
12			780	772		195	Jan-67
13			720	687		56	Feb-65
19			710	700		21	Nov-73
20			720	710		70	Oct-73
21			730	713		76	Oct-73
22			730	722		59	Dec-69
23	100		730	710	630	100	Nov-63
24			720	716.5		50	Apr-58
25			720	690		73	Jul-62
26			730	695		75	Oct-66
27	8		795	777	787	132	Dec-67
28	9		810	799	801	82	Jul-62
29	7		820	816	813	55	Feb-61
35	38		760		722	90	Nov-56
36			740	720		45	Nov-63
<u>Walnut Twp.</u>							
A			710			35	Sep-85
C			700	685		63	Mar-88
D			700	690		46	Jan-91
E			700	683		46	Jul-94
F			700	682		43	Sep-94
G			700	685		47	Jun-94
10			670	652		38	May-60
11			700	688		57	Jan-60
31			720	685		100	Oct-59
32			710	670		96	Aug-71
36			710	680		66	Jun-71
37			710	685		80	Jan-60
38			690	675		41	Apr-70
39			690	679		44	Mar-73
40			680	657		44	Oct-61

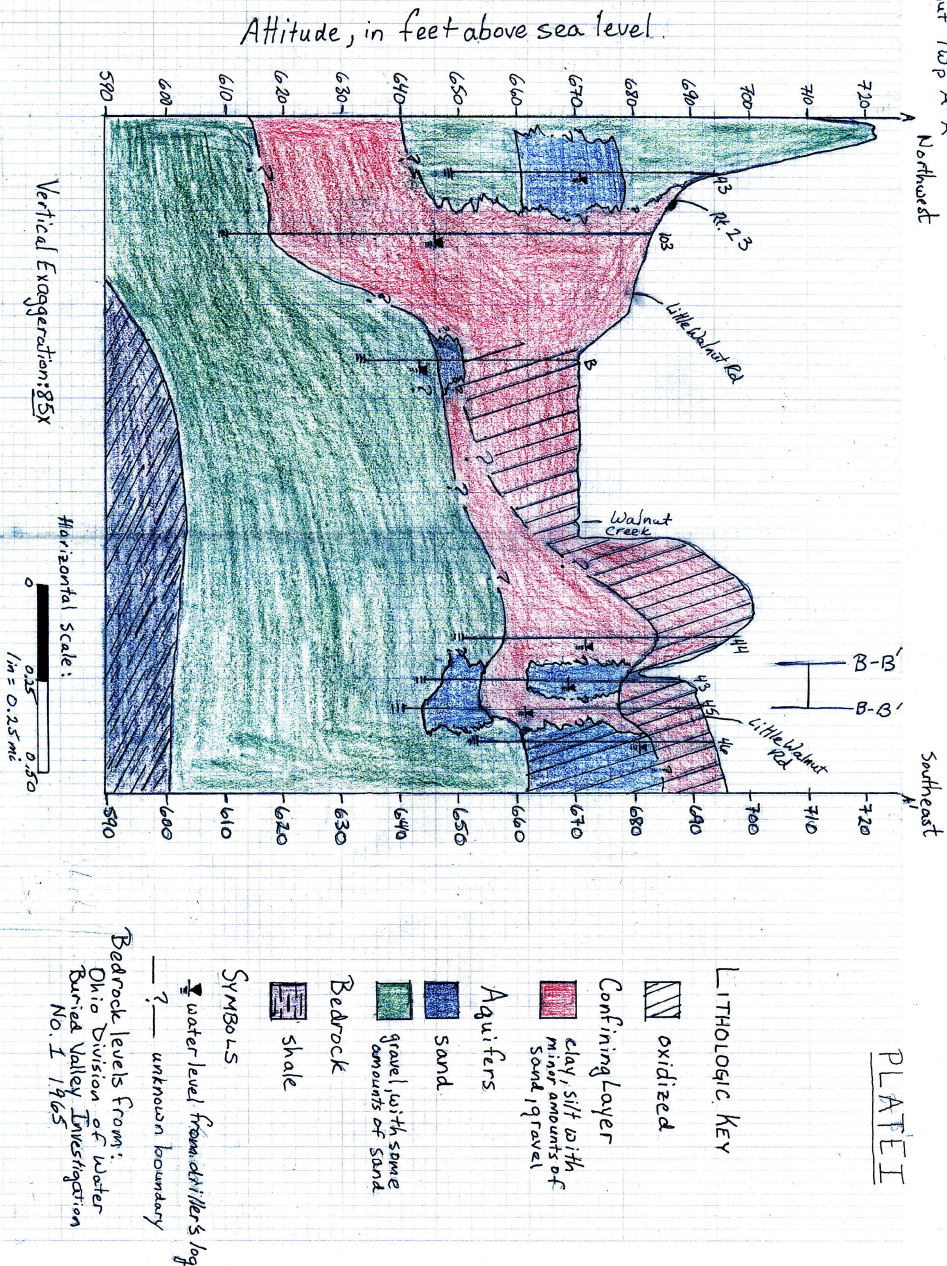
\* The numerical designations were assigned by ODNR, the alphabetical designations were created for this study.

Table 1

Well #	depth to bedrock		surface elevation (ft):			depth well (ft)	date
	(ft)		land	water level	bedrock		
41			700	674		45	Jun-58
42			700	680		39	Aug-67
43			700	681		40	Mar-59
44			700	676		45.5	Jun-61
45			690	660		51	Jul-74
46			690	677		40	Jun-65
47			700	678		44	Oct-58
48			710	669		104	Jun-59
49			700	668		52	Apr-74
49			700	670		45	May-60
50			700	682		53	Dec-71
51			695	669		62	Oct-76
52			690			66	Jan-77
54			710	688		44	Oct-58
57			690	682		39	Jun-67

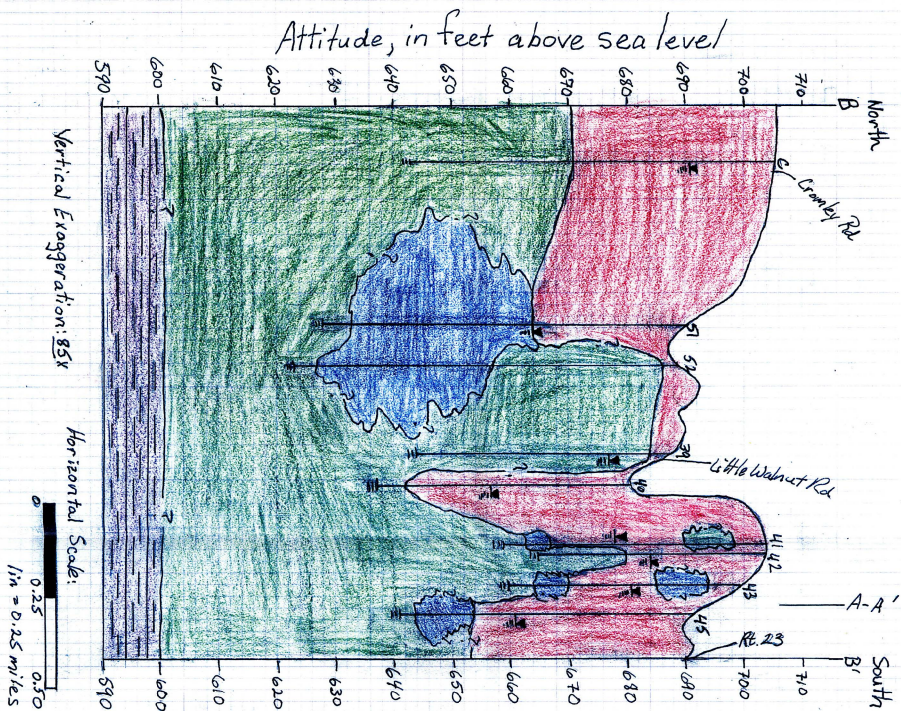
\* The numerical designations were assigned by ODNR, the alphabetical designations were created for this study.

# PLATE I





# PLATE II



## LITHOLOGIC KEY

oxidized

confining layers

clay, silt with small amount sand, gravel

aquifers

sand

sand and gravel

bedrock

shale

## SYMBOLS

water level from driller's log

unknown boundary

Bedrock levels from:  
Ohio Division of Water  
Buried Valley Investigation  
No. 1, 1965



A North

A' South

Altitude, in feet above sea level



Vertical Exaggeration: 85x

Scale: 0 0.25 0.50  
1 in = 0.25 miles

# PLATE III

## LITHOLOGIC KEY

oxidized

Confining layers

clay silt with minor amounts sand, gravel

Aquifers

sand

sand & gravel

Bedrock

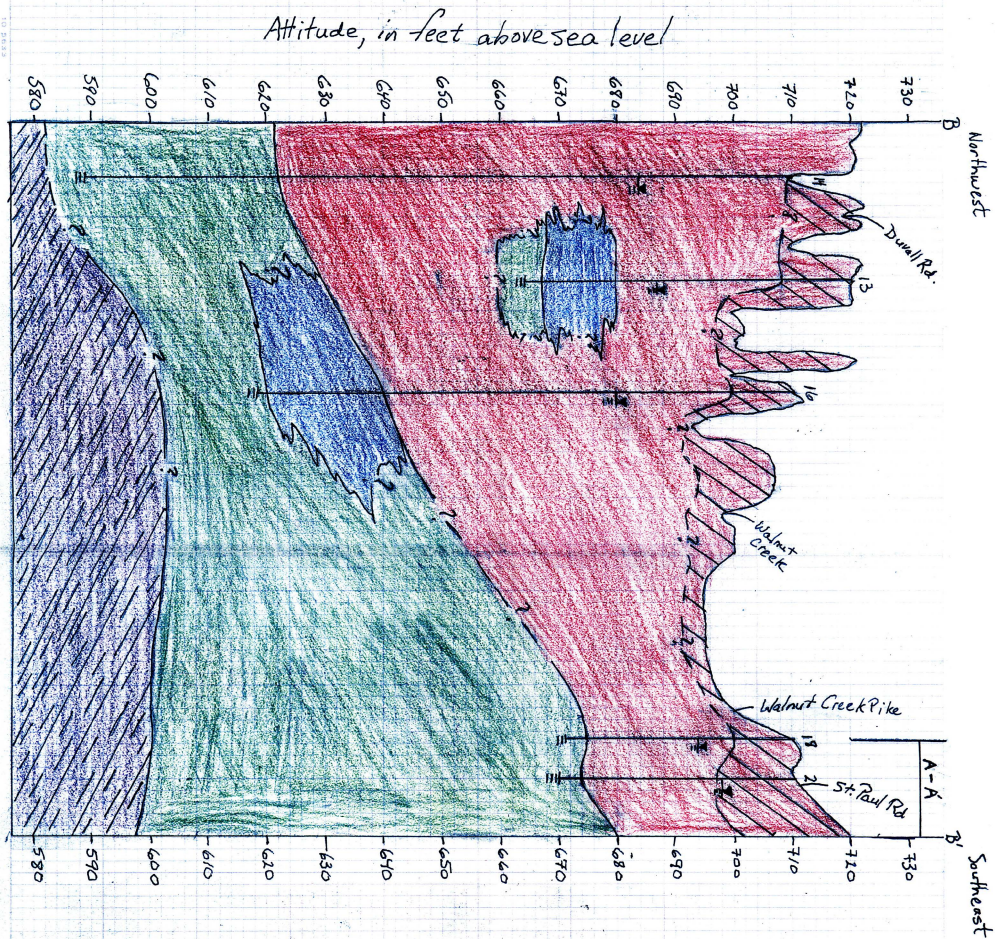
shale

## SYMBOLS

water level from  
drillers log  
unknown  
boundary

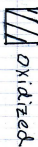
Bedrock levels from:  
Ohio Division of water  
Buried Valley  
Investigation  
No. 1, 1965





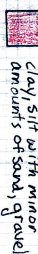
## PLATE IV

### LITHOLOGIC KEY

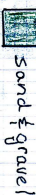
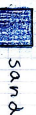


oxidized

### Confining Layers



### Aquifers

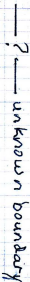
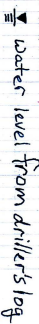


### Bedrock



shale

### SYMBOLS



Bedrock levels from  
Ohio Division of Water  
Buried Valley Investigation  
No. 1, 1965

Scale



1" = 0.25 mi.

Vertical exaggeration  $\times 25$